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STAFF NOTES:

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106

25X1

August 11, 1975

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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

25X1

C O N T E N T S

August 11, 1975

Soviet Comments on the Summit. 1

Sino-Soviet Trade Figures Announced. 2

Romanian Military Delegation
Visits the USSR 3

25X1

Soviet Comments on the Summit

The effusive Soviet media coverage of Helsinki points to the mutual balanced force reductions talks as the next item on Moscow's European negotiating agenda.

Alexander Bovin, writing in *Izvestiya*, and other commentators are saying that the Helsinki summit has created a climate conducive to ongoing disarmament negotiations, including SALT. There has been little evidence that Moscow plans any other major disarmament initiative at this time.

The commentaries have given no hint of what else Moscow now has in mind for its European diplomacy, nor is there any sign that the Soviets are going to use CSCE to push any time soon for regional conferences elsewhere.

The Soviets are making their own interpretation of what the Helsinki document means. The Politburo communique blessing CSCE refers to the humanitarian exchanges within the "observance of the law and traditions of each country." This wording had been specifically rejected by the West during the negotiations and is not included in the final document.

The Soviets are also taking the offensive on the non-interference clause of the CSCE document. They used it in *Pravda* on August 7 to excoriate the EC for what Moscow argues is the West's interference in the internal affairs of Portugal. This line is clearly intended to be ~~pre~~-emptive. Moscow has already shown its sensitivity to allegations that it is materially supporting the Portuguese Communists and the radical elements of the Armed Forces Movement and undoubtedly anticipates that the West will sooner or later claim that the Soviets are violating the Helsinki agreements.

25X1

August 11, 1975

Sino-Soviet Trade Figures Announced

[redacted] 25X1
an official in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade stated that the recently concluded trade agreement with China called for two-way trade of 211 million rubles in 1975. Sino-Soviet trade amounted to 214 million rubles in 1974. At current exchange rates this year's trade will be worth about \$300 million. 25X1

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In earlier private conversations [redacted]
[redacted] Chinese and Soviet officials said that negotiations were prolonged over a decision to switch to current world prices from a price structure fixed in 1958. China's exports consist largely of commodities that have a "world" market price--textiles, fruits, minerals, and metals. But Soviet exports to China--primarily civilian aircraft, trucks, and machinery--are not comparable to their Western counterparts in either quality or value. Because of this it is possible that the Chinese and Soviets may not have been able to agree on a new set of prices and reverted to the previous pricing system. If so, the volume of trade would be about the same as over the past few years.

X1

[redacted] the Soviet trade official expressed Moscow's interest in expanding trade "on the basis of mutual benefit." Earlier the same day, a Tass broadcast cautioned that "the reduction of mutually profitable contacts with the socialist countries has done irreparable damage to the economy of China," citing China's large foreign trade deficit. Peking, however, has shown no interest in expanding trade beyond current levels.

25X1

August 11, 1975

25X1

-2-

Romanian Military Delegation Visits the USSR.

Major General Gomoiu--a deputy defense minister and secretary of the army's Higher Political Council--recently led a delegation to Moscow, where evidently troubled talks were held with ranking officials in the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet army and navy. Soviet army general Yepishev, the directorate's chief, invited the Romanians.

In reporting the talks, the Romanian party daily, *Scinteia*, omitted any of the usual positive phrasing to describe the discussions. "Questions of party political work" were reportedly considered, and the fact that Romania's Colonel General Nicolescu, who is charged with Warsaw Pact affairs, welcomed Gomoiu home suggests that Pact matters were the principal topic.

Some reports had indicated that Moscow wanted to use the visit to press Romania's armed forces to comply more fully with Warsaw Pact political policies. Bucharest's military contacts with Western countries have also reportedly disturbed the Soviets.

The selection of Gomoiu, a one-star general, for talks with four-star general Yepishev suggests that Ceausescu deliberately chose to deliver a snub to Moscow. In the past, Bucharest has tried to frustrate Soviet efforts to obtain greater cohesion within the Pact by sending the lowest ranking delegations to bloc military meetings.

Moreover, Ceausescu has long preached that changes in the relationship between Romania's military forces and the Soviet-dominated Warsaw Pact must be handled on a government-to-government basis. Since 1966, he has not allowed the Soviet Ministry of Defense to deal directly with its Romanian counterpart.

August 11, 1975

The Soviets have no apparent reason to be dissatisfied with Ceausescu's orthodox domestic policies, including the political indoctrination of the military. They may well be irritated, however, by Ceausescu's stress on the military as a defender of the fatherland, with only a secondary mission to protect the socialist community.

25X1

August 11, 1975

Next 2 Page(s) In Document Exempt